

# The Old Presidio Historic Trail

A short walk to the Serra Museum and the site of California's first Spanish mission and presidio.

What is at the end of this trail?  
(Find out on the next sign.)

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Did you know?

At the end of this trail you will discover:

- the site where California's first mission began in 1769
- The ruins of the first European settlement on the west coast of the U.S. and Canada
- A museum which celebrates California's beginnings.

Why is this a "Historical Trail"?  
(Find out on the next sign.)

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Did you know?

On a trail close to this one, soldiers and families walked down from the Spanish presidio two centuries ago to tend their gardens and livestock. Around 1820, some families started to build houses beside their gardens and "Old Town" was born. The Carrillo House may have been the first, part of it still stands on the golf course to your left.

What is a Presidio?  
(Find out on the next sign.)

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Did you know?

Presidios were Spanish frontier military outposts.

After this presidio was founded in 1769, other California presidios soon followed: Monterey (1770), San Francisco (1776), and Santa Barbara (1784).

Did many Spaniards live in the Spanish presidio?  
(Find out on the next sign.)



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Did you know?

Only a few Spanish born soldiers lived in this presidio. Almost all were born in Mexico (a Spanish Colony until 1821), and over half had some degree of African or Indian Ancestry.

Who were the first people to walk on this hillside?  
(Find out on the next sign.)

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Did you know?

Native Americans were the first San Diegans. The Kumeyaay (pronounced Koo-may-yie) people have lived here for over a thousand years. Today, San Diego County contains more Indian reservations than any other county in the United States .

What was the Mormon Battalion?

(Find out on the next sign.)

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Did you know?

Atop the hill to your right stood Fort Stockton , a triangular earthen fort where one company of the "Mormon Battalion" stationed in 1847, during the war between the United States and Mexico, these volunteer U.S. Soldiers marched from Iowa clearing a road as they came. By the time the Mormon Battalion arrived, the United States occupied California.

Has Presidio Park always been lush and green?  
(Find out on the next sign.)

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Did you know?

This Park was once dry and treeless. Since the late 1880's , imported water has helped make San Diego green.

Today the presidio is a buried ruin and the mission stands six miles away. What happened to them?  
(Find out on the next sign.)

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Did you know?

The mission and presidio began side by side here in 1769, but five years later the missionaries relocated to a more fertile spot six miles east. The presidio remained Southern California's administrative center until it was abandoned in favor of "Old Town" about 1837, most of the presidio's roof tiles were removed for use on new houses and rains melted the unprotected walls. The Serra Museum displays many artifacts uncovered in the buried ruins by archaeologists.

Who is the Serra Museum named after?  
(Find out on the next sign.)

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Did you know?

Father Junipero Serra was the Spanish missionary who founded Alta California's first mission on this hill, between 1769 and 1821 this Franciscan priest and his successors established 21 missions.

What made the Spanish choose this hill for their mission and presidio?

(Find out on the next sign.)

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Did you know?

Several reasons made this hill attractive to the Spanish . It was flat enough to build on, yet steep slopes on two sides offered some protection from attack. Drinkable water was available in the river bed below . From this hillside soldiers could watch the harbor for incoming ships. Since then trees and buildings have sprung up to block the view.

What lies under the grassy mound in front of you?

(Find out on the next sign.)

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The mounds outline the ruins of the presidio chapel it's transformation from a warehouse was completed in 1783 so the garrison could hear mass without making the trip up the valley to the Mission. A fire damaged the building in 1801, the building fell into disrepair about 1829 but continued to be used for sporadic religious services until about 1841.



When was the Serra Museum built?  
(Find out on the next sign.)



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*Did you know?*

The Serra Museum was built in 1929, it houses a large collection of archeological artifacts, historical objects and written materials related to early California and Spanish history.

The building of the museum was commissioned by George Marston and designed by William Templeton Johnson, the architect who also designed the San Diego Art Museum in Balboa Park.

This is the last sign in a series of 13 informational signs that begin on the corner of Mason St. at Juan St. Thank you for visiting Presidio Park... *Where History Abounds...*

